

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

U. S. Department of Agriculture

HOUSEKEEPERS! CHAT

Monday, August 28, 1933

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

SUBJECT: "Fruit Puddings and Desserts for Economical Meals." Information from Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

---oo00oo---

We were talking about fruit puddings and desserts the other day and the Recipe Lady said that peach dumpling is probably one of the best-known of all summer desserts. Many people would go even farther and say that peach dumpling is the best of all summer desserts. Dumplings--either peach or apple--are among those old-fashioned, fruit-and-pastry combinations that hold a record for appealing to anyone's appetite. If you haven't treated your family to golden-brown peach dumplings hot from the oven with hard sauce or peach sauce over them, your family is missing a lot. Better make it up to them before the season gets along any farther.

Maybe you'd like to hear how the Recipe Lady makes her peach dumplings. It's quite easy. She rolls out pastry dough in rounds about the size of fruit plates. In the center of each round, she places a whole peeled peach. Yes, a whole peach with the stone left in. She sprinkles the peach with a mixture of sugar, cinnamon, and a few grains of salt and she dots it with butter. Then she lifts up the edges of the dough and presses them together so that the dough makes a jacket for the fruit inside. Then she places each peach in its pastry jacket in a greased muffin tin and bakes it in the oven--a moderate oven. About thirty minutes is the right time for baking. She serves her dumplings piping hot with a butter and sugar hard sauce, or with a liquid sauce.

Apple dumplings she makes in about the same way, and she's very particular about having her apples tart though ripe and juicy.

Dumplings are just one of a long list of good, old-fashioned puddings that you can make with either peaches or apples. As long as these two fruits are inexpensive and plentiful, you never need to worry about the dessert problem. Apples and peaches probably offer more good dessert possibilities than any other two fruits put together. And now is the season to make the most of them.

Did you ever consider how many famous dishes invented by our grandmothers and great-grand-mothers feature these fruits? Dumplings and cobblers and tarts, fruit betties and shortcakes--these are just a few on the list. Most of these old-fashioned desserts are baked. Most of them combine some starchy food with the fruit. Most of them contain a bit of spice like cinnamon and nutmeg for added flavoring.

For example, notice the dumplings we've just been describing. Dumplings are a combination of pastry and fruit seasoned with a cinnamon and sugar mixture. The same goes for peach and apple tarts. The same for peach and apple pie. Cobbler is another old-time dessert made of biscuit dough and fruit. Brown betty is still another which combines bread crumbs and fruit. Still

another old favorite is fruit tapioca baked in the oven, a combination of fruit and that inexpensive starchy food, tapioca.

According to the history books, cobbler is an American dish. The dictionary calls it "a thick-crust fruit pie." That about describes it. To make peach cobbler you roll out rich, slightly sweet biscuit dough into a thin sheet. You line the bottom and sides of a deep baking pan with this sheet of dough. Then you fill up the dish with sliced peaches in a deep even layer. Sprinkle with sugar and spice and dot with butter. Over the top put strips of thin pastry, criss-cross, if you like them that way. And bake your cobbler in a hot oven until the peaches are tender. The same goes for apple cobbler, made from tart, juicy apples.

As for pies and tarts in general, no use discussing them. No need to mention to you how apples and peaches rank with every good pie-maker.

I've never heard who the original Betty was who gave her name to those good baked combinations of fruit and bread crumbs, but I know she had a fine idea for a delicious and low-cost dessert. For apple or peach brown betty you need ripe, juicy, tart fruit and bread crumbs, oven toasted until they're very crisp and light brown in color. And you need sugar, cinnamon, salt and butter for flavoring. You need a greased baking dish for this pudding. A layer of crumbs first, then a layer of diced fruit, seasoning, and another layer of crumbs--that's the way to build up a brown betty. And remember to have crumbs on the very top with some melted butter to help them. Bake from 30 to 40 minutes or until the fruit is soft.

Cover on the baking dish? Yes, to start. But take the cover off during the last few minutes of baking to let the crumbs brown on top.

What to serve with brown betty? Well, some like it with plain cream and some like it with whipped cream and still others prefer hard sauce. Suit yourself.

That's quite a list of desserts already. But let's say a word about fruit tapioca before we stop. That interesting and inexpensive starchy food called tapioca can make excellent fruit desserts. And then again, it can make a sticky, pasty, tasteless mass. Results depend on the way you cook it. Be sure to have the water boiling hot and salted. Stir in the tapioca and cook in a double boiler about 15 minutes or until it is clear. Add sugar, cinnamon, salt and lemon juice for flavoring. Now arrange sliced apples or peaches in a greased shallow baking dish. Pour the tapioca mixture over them. Finally bake the pudding in a moderate oven until the fruit is tender and the top is lightly browned. You can serve this dish either hot or cold. And you can serve it with either plain or whipped cream.

There's a collection of four good summer puddings, nutritious puddings, inexpensive puddings, hot baked puddings--all made from apples or peaches plus some starchy food with usually spice and sugar for seasoning.

Now let's have our Monday economy menu. Let's have thinly sliced fried or broiled ham with chile sauce or some other relish; then, boiled potatoes with ham gravy; then baked summer squash; and for dessert, peach betty.

Tomorrow: "Shopping Hints on Ready-Made Clothing."

